

Grass Lawn Neighborhood Alternatives and Preliminary Recommendations

Duplexes, Threplexes and Fourplexes

Issue:	Should duplexes, threplexes or fourplexes be allowed in R-4, R-5, and R-6* single-family zones in the Grass Lawn neighborhood? If yes, what development standards should be required?
Description/ Background: <u>*R-4, R-5, and R-6 zoning means:</u> four, five, or 6 residential, single-family dwelling units are allowed per acre.	<p>Background</p> <p>Based on comments from the Grass Lawn neighborhood workshop, Housing Fair, Design Day, and comments from the Grass Lawn CAC, staff has addressed the issue above and prepared alternatives and preliminary recommendations for the CAC to consider. The Comprehensive Plan also specifically asks neighborhoods to consider allowing duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes as an outright use instead of a conditional use.</p> <p>Summary of comments on the issue we have heard so far include:</p> <p><u>CAC Members:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft Grass Lawn neighborhood vision: <i>Like its namesake park, Grass Lawn remains an attractive green area. The neighborhood includes a mix of Low-Moderate Density Residential, Moderate-Density Residential and High-Density Residential areas. Higher density residential development has occurred near access to mass transit. There are a variety of types of housing that blend in well with the neighborhood including live/work studios for artists.</i> • Goals and Objectives of Grass Lawn neighborhood plan: <i>Keep a good mix in the neighborhood by offering a variety of housing styles, including affordable housing (not necessarily high-density housing).</i> • What are the City's plans to implement multifamily? It offers another choice for people. • There should be an opportunity for those who work in Redmond to live in Redmond in addition to those earning 80% of the King County median income. • There are too many \$500,000 and \$1,000,000 homes and not enough at the other end of the spectrum. • It is in everyone's self interest to provide affordable homes for those who work in Redmond to live in Redmond, as well as others who go

<p><u>**Hearing Examiner:</u> Some cities and counties use hearing examiners to conduct public hearings and make recommendations or decisions on behalf of city councils. The purpose is to separate administration of regulations from policy making or planning, to provide expertise in conducting hearings, promote fairness and community interests, and reduce the workload on city councils. The hearing examiner is a professional appointed by City Council, but does not hold a City office or position. Hearing examiners typically have knowledge and expertise in law, land use, engineering, land development, design, and planning.</p>	<p>through life changes (divorce, loss of spouse, disabled, job loss, etc.). It is in the best interest of our Grass Lawn neighborhood to accommodate for this and the economic viability of the neighborhood. There should be a way to keep people living in Redmond after being laid off from their jobs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To some extent the zoning needs to be changed to allow people/employees to live on-site. Perhaps mandate an inclusionary requirement. <p><u>A recap about Housing Fair and Design Day:</u> The Housing Fair and Design day were two public opportunities to talk about housing in Redmond. The discussion on housing in Redmond has come about from direction given by the City Council. That direction is to look for ways to increase the supply and diversity of housing through a preferred growth strategy they are setting for the next 20 years. The Council has heard that people, their parents, and children are not able to continue living in the community as they go through various stages of life and that there should be more opportunities for people to live in the community where they work. As the Council looks to the future quality of life in our neighborhood, they realize that changes and updates to the Comprehensive Plan (the City’s vision for the future) are needed. Housing is a significant part of Redmond’s future vision and an important topic to be updated.</p> <p><u>Description</u> Per Redmond’s Community Development Guide, duplexes, triplexes, and fourplexes are currently allowed in the R-4, R-5, and R-6 zones when in subdivisions of 10 or more lots and when “conditionally approved,” unless otherwise allowed through a neighborhood plan. “Conditionally approved” means:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Subject to all land use, density, site requirements, and development standards with some exceptions listed below; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Required to be located on lots larger than the average lot size in the zone; ○ Required to be visually separated from existing single-family uses through planting, natural screening, fencing, or site planning; ○ Must meet design requirements for roofs, entries, chimney form, and window framing, and must be consistent in height, bulk and scale with nearby residential uses. ○ Duplexes made affordable to households earning 80% or less of the median income for King County are exempt from some requirements and may be allowed in smaller subdivisions. ○ The City’s Design Review Board reviews threeplexes and fourplexes and developments of more than one duplex. • Notifying property owners within 500 feet of the site at the time a
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • person applies for a permit; • Holding a public hearing; • The City’s Hearing Examiner** makes a recommendation; and • The City Council makes the final decision. <p>In an effort to increase the variety and type of housing available in their neighborhoods, the Willows/Rose Hill and Overlake neighborhoods allow multiplex housing outright instead of “conditionally” with certain restrictions. For example, the Willows/Rose Hill neighborhood plan allows duplexes as an outright use without “conditional approval” and on individual lots with specific site and architectural design requirements. However, triplexes and fourplexes are only allowed as part of a demonstration project. The Overlake neighborhood plan also allows multiplex housing on individual lots with specific requirements.</p>
Alternatives:	<p>1) <u>Permit duplex homes in R-4, R-5 and R-6 zones, provided that development standards, including lot size, are met. Continue to conditionally allow threeplexes and fourplexes in R-4, R-5 and R6 zones.</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Under this alternative, duplex homes would be allowed in R-4, R-5, and R-6 zones in the Grass Lawn neighborhood provided they meet specific development and design standards. • Duplex homes would no longer be limited to subdivisions for 10 units or more, but also could be located on individual lots or could be included as part of subdivision of 2 to 9 lots. • Design standards would require that the duplex homes look like single-family homes. Specific standards would be adopted to ensure that they fit in the neighborhood. • Staff would review and determine if the applicant met the specific site and design standards for duplexes. If the duplex were part of a plat of 10 or more lots, the Hearing Examiner would hold a public hearing on the plat and citizens could comment as part of that. If the duplex is on an individual lot or is part of a subdivision of 2 to 9 lots, staff would review compliance with the standards instead of the Hearing Examiner and a public hearing would not be held. • Current regulations for threeplexes and fourplexes would continue. The neighborhood would continue to have a say in the location of triplexes and fourplexes through a public hearing and the City Council would make the final decision.

	<p>2) <u>Permit duplexes, threeplexes and fourplexes in R-4, R-5 or R6 zones, provided that development standards, including special lot size requirements, are met.</u> Under this alternative, the conditions outlined in Alternative 1 for duplexes would apply also to triplexes and fourplexes.</p> <p>3) <u>Continue to conditionally allow duplexes, threeplexes and fourplexes in R-4, R-5 and R-6 zones.</u> This would continue the current regulations and review process as described above under Background.</p>
Preliminary Staff Recommendation:	<p>Staff recommends that Alternatives 1 and 2 would maintain space primarily for single-family detached houses while encouraging more opportunity for duplex, and triplex and fourplex development. The alternatives would also help ensure that the houses fit in with single-family neighborhood character, achieve greater variety in housing that can work for people of various household sizes and ages, and have a minimal effect on traffic.</p>